

Quince Orchard Road project taken off table

■ North Potomac community rejoices over their victory

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The County Council unanimously agreed on March 21 to eliminate a \$5 million project that would have straightened the S curve on Quince Orchard Road from the proposed six-year capital budget.

The council voted for a second time in as many years against the proposal to straighten the winding portion of Quince Orchard Road, as well as making fixes to the road from Dufief Mill Road to 800 feet south of it from the 2007-12 Capital Improvements Program. The County Council ultimately decided there was not sufficient evidence to prove there was an increased number of accidents as a result of the curve, Councilwoman Nancy M. Floreen (D-At large) of Garrett Park said in a telephone interview Monday.

"We continue to be extremely concerned about safety on Quince Orchard Road," Floreen said. "I'm not persuaded [that] straightening it will improve safety on the road...it would increase speed and it would have the potential to increase safety concerns instead of eliminating them."

In 2004, the council eliminated the project from the capital budget. But the Department of Public Works and Transportation proposed the project for the second time in this lat-

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est budget after finding new data that said in its initial analysis, the curve itself was not considered and looking at it alone, accidents were doubled the standard.

The North Potomac community has argued for the past several years that the winding portions of the road are natural speed barriers and straightening the curves will only encourage speed.

"It has been rejected twice now and I think that's pretty good evidence that it's not wanted by the residents, the council or by anyone who looks at it closely," said Jonathan Putnam, president of North Potomac Citizens Association.